

A New *Rhynchospora* (Cyperaceae) from the Cordillera de Talamanca, Costa Rica

Jorge Gómez-Laurito

Escuela de Biología, Universidad de Costa Rica, Ciudad Universitaria 2060, San José, Costa Rica

ABSTRACT. *Rhynchospora cabecarae* Gómez-Laurito (Cyperaceae), a new species belonging to section *Racemosae* C. B. Clarke, is described and illustrated.

A new species of *Rhynchospora* Vahl (Cyperaceae) is described as a result of revision of material recently collected during a field trip to the Caribbean slope of the Cordillera de Talamanca in Costa Rica.

Rhynchospora cabecarae Gómez-Laurito, sp. nov. TYPE: Costa Rica. Limón: Talamanca, N flank of Cerro Casma, along Ujarrás-San José Cabécar trail, Cordillera de Talamanca, 9°20'30"N, 83°13'30"W, 2250–2270 m, 17 Mar. 1993, M. Grayum 10354 (holotype, USJ). Figure 1.

Ex affinitate *R. boliviensis* C. B. Clarke atque *R. dissitiflorae* Steudel ex Bockeler, ab utroque characteribus inflorescentiarum et achaeniarum praecipue differt.

Perennial, loosely caespitose with short rhizomes and coarse roots. Culms covered by old sheaths, erect, stiff, ca. 60 cm tall, 2.5 mm thick, nodose, leafy with many cauline leaves. Leaves 8–20 cm long, erect, somewhat wiry; blades linear, 2–2.8 mm wide, gradually narrowed apically, the margins ciliate to scabrous, channeled, the midrib adaxially pilose, raised and ciliate abaxially. Sheaths striate, reddish brown, villous with soft, curled hairs. Inflorescence paniculate, of ca. 5 partial panicles, the panicles not exceeding the leaves, 1.5–2.5 cm long, 1.3–2 cm wide, of 11–23 ascending spikelets; the peduncles 1.3–2 cm long, terete to complanate, hirsute, the axis sparsely hirsute. Bracts leaflike. Bractlets subulate, 4–6 mm long, hirsute. Spikelets 6–7 mm long, 1–1.3 mm wide, acute, reddish brown, 2-fruited. Lower glumes empty, ovate, 2.5–3 mm long, mucronate, other flower-bearing glumes lanceolate, 4 mm long, 1.5 mm wide, membranous, mucronate at the tip. Achenes ovate-elliptic to elliptic, tumid, 1.2 mm long, 0.7 mm wide, with a conspicuous basal stipe 0.5 mm long, shiny-castaneous, cancellate with minute isodiametrical cells. Style-base conical, 1 mm high, 0.8 mm broad at base, dorsiventrally compressed, brown. Hypogynous bristles 5, upwardly scabrous, rather slender, shorter than the achene body, or often only 2 very short rudimentary ones. Stamens 3.

Etymology. This species is named after the Cabécar people, who inhabit the Talamanca region.

Rhynchospora cabecarae is a member of section *Racemosae* C. B. Clarke because of its short rhizome, culms covered by old sheaths, many cauline leaves, inflorescence paniculate, number of hypogynous bristles shorter than the achene body, often only 2 vestigials, and cancellate achenes. It is apparently related to *R. boliviensis* C. B. Clarke and *R. dissitiflora* Steudel ex Bockeler. As has recently been stated by Thomas (1993), this group is quite variable and rare. *Rhynchospora cabecarae* is known only from the type collection. It is distinguished from the above-mentioned species by the combination of characters in Table 1.

Rhynchospora cabecarae was found in an open scrubland with *Sphagnum* and shrubs and treelets of several families, including *Clusia* (Clusiaceae),

Table 1. Comparison of three related species of *Rhynchospora*.

	<i>R. boliviensis</i>	<i>R. dissitiflora</i>	<i>R. cabecarae</i>
Inflorescences	A single open panicle with slender peduncles 1–5 cm long with solitary spikelets	3–5 racemes, each with 1–4 spikelets with slender and pendant peduncles	5 partial small panicles, each with 11–23 spikelets; peduncles short, 1–3 cm long
Achenes	Widely obovate, lenticular to plano-convex; brownish gray to straw color. Stipe none	Widely obovate, lenticular, pale brownish gray. Stipe none	Ovate to ovate-elliptic, tumid, shiny-castaneous, with a distinct stipe 0.5 mm long



Figure 1. *Rhynchospora cabecarae* Gómez-Laurito (Grayum 10354, USJ). —a. Habit. —b. Partial panicle. —c. Achene.

Prunus (Rosaceae), *Vaccinium* (Ericaceae), *Ilex* (Aquifoliaceae), *Miconia* (Melastomataceae), *Paliourea* (Rubiaceae), *Gaiadendron* (Loranthaceae), *Monnina* (Polygalaceae), *Neomirandea* (Asteraceae), and *Phyllonoma* (Grossulariaceae) (M. Grayum, in litt. 1994).

Acknowledgments. I am grateful to Michael H. Grayum for reviewing the manuscript and to Judy Hoomans for the excellent illustration.

Literature Cited

Thomas, W. W. 1993. A synopsis of *Rhynchospora* (Cyperaceae) in Mesoamerica. *Brittonia* 44: 14–44.